

# ពិធីបុណ្យអុំទូក បុរេខ្មែរ



งานแข่งเรือสายสัมพันธ์ประจำปี ที่ ๙

*Welcome to the  
Ninth Annual Lowell  
Southeast Asian  
Water Festival!*

*August 19-20, 2005*

**Major Funding Provided by the Theodore Edson Parker Foundation and the Wang Foundation**

The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival is made possible with the generous support from the Theodore Edson Parker Foundation and the Wang Foundation in collaboration with the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association (CMAA), Lao Family Mutual Association (LFMA), Light of Cambodian Children, Inc. (LCC), Thai Association of Boston, Wat Buddha Bhavana, Trairantanaram Temple, Lowell National Historical Park, the City of Lowell, Jericho Road Project, Middlesex community Lowell, Lowell Telecommunication Corporation (LTC), Southeast Asian Bilingual Advocates Inc (Sabai), Keep Lowell Beautiful, Patrick J. Mogan Cultural Center, Spindle City Corps Recycling, Lowell Police Department, Bob Pare Photography local businesses, community organizations, and numerous volunteers.



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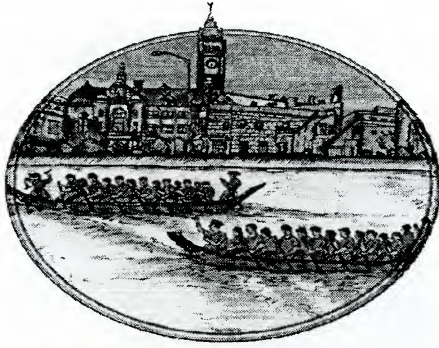
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## Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival, Inc.

c/o Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association  
165 Jackson Street ~ Lowell ~ MA 01852 ~ 978 596-1013



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Ven. Seng Samoeurnt  
Ven. Seng Saphoeun  
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Armand Mercier, City Mayor  
Rithy Uong, Former City Councilor

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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(Vice President)  
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### INCORPORATORS

Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association  
(CMAA)

Lao Family Mutual Association (LFMA)

Light of Cambodian Children, Inc. (LCC)

Wat Buddhahavvana of MA

Thai Association of Boston

### EVENT COORDINATOR

Tooch T. Van

Friday, August 12, 2005

Dear community members and friends:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival, Inc., I would like to extend a personal invitation for you to join us at the ninth annual Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival. As you may know, the festival celebrates an important aspect of Lowell's cultural diversity - the Southeast Asian community is Lowell's third largest ethnic population. The event showcases Southeast Asian boat races, traditional and contemporary performances and dances, international foods, handcrafted arts, and an art exhibits. Southeast Asians believe "Water is Life". To celebrate this belief, Cambodian, Thai, Lao people come together in Lowell to celebrate the connection of water to all aspects of life—food, agriculture, spirituality and economic prosperity.

The festival typically draws 50,000 to 60,000 visitors to Lowell's Merrimack River each year. This year's event will partake on Saturday, August 20, from 9:00 am-5:00 pm. Prior to the main event, we will have the Floating Candles Ceremony on Friday evening, August 19, from 5:00 pm -9:30 pm, in downtown Lowell at the Middlesex Community College Plaza, Lower Locks. This ceremony, which includes floating candles, incense, and flowers, is dedicated to each of our personal hopes and aspirations for a prosperous, dignified, and healthy life. A number of activities are planned between 5:00 pm and 9:30 pm with the Floating Candles Ceremony hoped to begin around 7:30 pm. Festival admission for both days is free.

The Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival, Inc. would like to acknowledge the generous support we have received from the Theodore Edson Parker Foundation and the Wang Foundation, as well as many other funders and sponsors. In addition to our incorporators, we would also like to thank the following organizations and entities in their commitment and dedication towards the success of this festival: Trairantanaram Temple, Lowell National Historical Park, the City of Lowell, Jericho Road Project, Middlesex community Lowell, Lowell Telecommunication Corporation (LTC), Southeast Asian Bilingual Advocates Inc (Sabai), Keep Lowell Beautiful, Patrick J. Mogan Cultural Center, Spindle City Corps Recycling, Lowell Police Department, Bob Pare Photography, local businesses, community organizations, and numerous volunteers.

Once again, I hope you will join us to explore and experience the cultural enrichment the Southeast Asian Water Festival provides.

Sincerely,  
Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival Inc.

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## FRIENDS OF THE WATER FESTIVAL

Community Insurance Group, Inc.  
Pine Street Chiropractic  
BankNorth  
Homeplace Realty  
Carabao Energy Drinks  
Louis Haskell, Attorney at Law



City of Lowell  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

By his honor  
Armand P. Mercier

Mayor  
A Proclamation

Whereas

For centuries, the Southeast Asian Water Festival has been celebrated in recognition of the importance of water in all aspects of life such as food, agriculture, spiritual and economic prosperity; and

Whereas

This year, the ninth annual Southeast Asian Water Festival is taking place here in Lowell along the banks of the Merrimack River, the very same river that furnished the mills with the power that made Lowell the manufacturing capital of America and the leader of the Industrial Revolution; and

Whereas

Asians and non-Asians alike can come to the river today and take part in this traditional festival by enjoying music, dance, boat racing, foods and many other events which commemorate those which have been taking place in Southeast Asia for many centuries.

Now, Therefore, I, ARMAND P. MERCIER, Mayor  
of the City of Lowell, Massachusetts, do hereby proclaim  
Saturday, August 20, 2005 as:

"SOUTHEAST ASIAN WATER FESTIVAL DAY"  
in the City of Lowell, and urge all citizens to join in the celebration.

Given this

20th

day of

August

20

05

Armand P. Mercier  
Mayor, City of Lowell



Koun Khmer TV  
Show (KKS) is a live  
show every Monday  
from 8:00pm to  
9:00pm from LTC  
Channel 8, Lowell,  
Massachusetts.

Executive Producer  
Buntha S. Krouch

Email  
bkrouch@kounkhmer.tv

Website:  
[www.kounkhmer.tv](http://www.kounkhmer.tv)

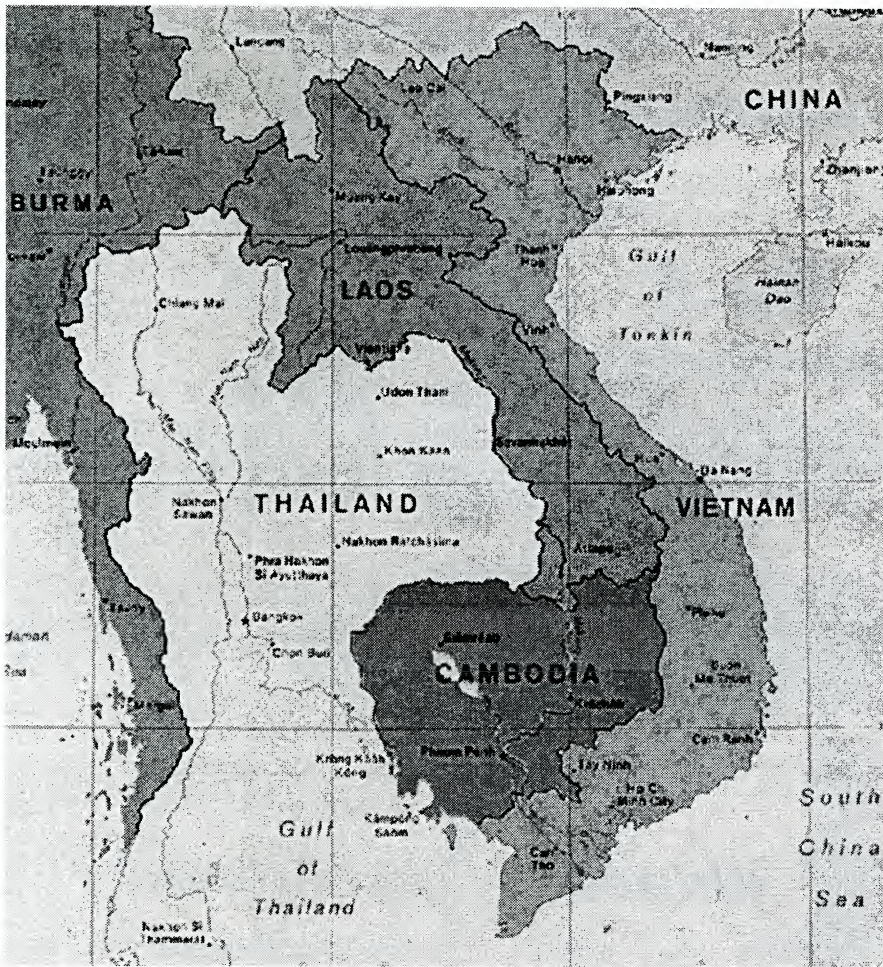
Phone  
(978) 804-1175

Mailing Address  
P.O. Box 292  
Lowell, MA 01853

The goal of KKS is to  
preserve Khmer  
traditional culture and  
art, and to provide local  
and international News  
to the community.

We are a proud  
supporter of the Lowell  
Southeast Asian  
Water Festival!





## Water Festivals in Southeast Asia

Written by Sarann Nuon and Sophy Theam

For many centuries in Southeast Asia, the Water Festival is an annual event celebrating the connection of water in all aspects of life – food, agriculture, spirituality and economic prosperity.

Although held at different parts of the year in different countries, water has always represented life and goodness to the peoples of Southeast Asia.

For instance, in Cambodia, the Water Festival begins on the first full moon at the end of October or November, at the time when the Mekong River reverses direction after filling up the Tonle Sap, the country's "Great Lake". When this phenomenon occurs, the downstream flow leaves behind an abundance of fish, marking a time for celebration and festivities. This includes the influx of over a million people from the countryside into the capital of Phnom Penh to witness the three-day boat racing event in which over 400 teams rowing 50-70 feet long boats compete.

In Thailand, the Water Festival is celebrated within the "Songkran" or the traditional Thai New Year. Just as in the countries of Cambodia and Laos, the New Year is celebrated from April 12<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup>. However, in Thailand, the celebration of Water is also incorporated into the festivities as it is believed water will wash away bad luck and bring in good luck for the incoming year. Therefore there are a lot of water

throwing aimed at everyone. And unlike Cambodia, the capital city pretty much empties of people as residents travel to their hometowns in the countryside to be with their relatives and close friends. Major celebrations take place in cities such as Chiang Mai and Sukhothai where traditional festivities are maintained.

And in Laos where although there is water throwing during the New Year in mid-April, their Water Festival, known as "Bun Nam" and more similar to Cambodia's "Bon Om Touk" is held around October also with boat racing ceremonies in riverside towns and cities such as Vientiane, Luang Prabang, and Savannakhet. Much smaller towns may hold their boat races on National Day which is on December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Back here in the United States where many have now called "home", the celebration of water continues in the Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival. Now in its Ninth year, the event draws 50,000 – 60,000 people from all walks of life to the banks of the Merrimac River. Flocking from around the nation as well from Canada, France, and even Australia, the festival is a time to meet friends and acquaintances, enjoy all sorts of ethnic foods reminiscent of the street vendors in the markets back home, and experience a fusion of ethnic performances and activities including boat racing on the 50 -70 feet long boats that have been seen dotting the Mekong River for centuries. Water is the celebration of life. Water is Life!

### MARTIN J. MCNULTY

Attorney at Law

694 Middlesex Street  
Lowell, MA 01851

Tel: 978.454.6737  
Fax: 978.654.6046



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# PATRICK J. MOGAN CULTURAL CENTER



The Patrick J. Mogan Cultural Center is a program of  
Lowell National Historical Park in partnership with  
University of Massachusetts Lowell

*Best Wishes*

*to the all the staff, volunteers, and participants of  
the Ninth Annual Southeast Asian Water Festival!*

*Thank you for celebrating  
the importance of water in  
our ongoing lives!*







## Law Office of Louis S. Haskell

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## **Program**

### **Friday Evening (August 19, 2005 at the Lower Locks Area & Middlesex Community College Plaza)**

No.	Time	Event
1.	5:00 pm	Ponleu Chiet Khmer Traditional Musicians
2.	5:25 pm	Blessing Ceremony
4.	6:00 pm	"Blessing Dance" by Somaly Hay & Co.
5.	6:15 pm	Special Guests
6.	6:25 pm	"Laos National Flower Dance" by Tamara Phongsavad
7.	6:35 pm	"Glorious Day Dance" by Somaly Hay & Co.
8.	6:45 pm	Ponleu Chiet Khmer Traditional Musicians
9.	6:55 pm	Somaly Hay Dance Troup
11.	7:15 pm	Candle light introductory by Ven. Sao Khon & Ven. Mongkon
12.	7:40 pm	Candle Floats
13.	8:30 pm	Music
14.	9:00 pm	Clean up

### **Saturday (August 20, 2005 by the Merrimac River) : Main Stage**

No.	Time	Event
1.	9:30 am	Traditional Musicians & Chhayam
2.	10:00 am	Blessing Ceremony
3.	10:20 am	Khmer Band
4.	10:30 am	Introduction
5.	10:35 am	"Blessing Dance" by Angkor Dance Troupe
6.	10:45 am	"Tawada" by Tawada of Boston
7.	10:55 am	"Laos National Flower Dance" by Tamara Phongsavad
8.	11:00 am	Chhayam Drum parade
9.	11:10 am	Special Guests (Mayor, etc.)
10.	11:40 am	Khmer Band
11.	11:50 am	"Coconut Dance" by Angkor Dance Troupe
12.	12:00 pm	"Bic Phimmackack" by Laotian Community Center of RI
13.	12:10 pm	"Lum Tang Vuy" by Tawada
14.	12:20 pm	Salem Band
15.	12:30 pm	"Sva Pol" by Angkor Dance Troupe
16.	12:45 pm	Band Thai/Lao
17.	12:55 pm	"Cooki Phimmackack" by Laotian Community Center of RI
18.	1:15 pm	"Mokor" by Angkor Dance Troupe
19.	1:30 pm	Javeline Entertainment Inc./Neang Neak Angkor Dance troupe
20.	2:00 pm	Boat Observation
21.	3:05 pm	Anny Robert by Laotian Community Center of RI
22.	3:15 pm	Betrayed Band
23.	3:45 pm	Boat Race Final result
24.	4:30 pm	Lao/Thai Band
25.	5:00 pm	Closing & Clean up

### **Saturday (August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2005 by the Merrimac River): Stage II**

No.	Time	Event
1.	10:30 am	Thai Band
2.	11:45 am	Cooki Phimmackack by Laotian Community Center of RI
3.	12:00 pm	Lum Tang Vuy by Tawada
4.	12:15 pm	Salem Modern Band
5.	12:45 pm	Javeline Entertainment Inc.
6.	1:00 pm	"Neang Neak" by Angkor Dance Troup
7.	1:15 pm	"Muythai" Demonstration
9.	1:20 pm	Betrayed Band
10.	1:40 pm	Lao Band
11.	2:00 pm	Observe Boat Race
12.	3:05 pm	Tawada by Tawada of Boston
13.	3:15 pm	Lao Dance
14.	3:30 pm	Khmer Band
15.	3:45 pm	Boat Race Results
16.	4:00 pm	Khmer Band & Closing

### **FREE BOAT TOURS!**

Saturday, August 20<sup>th</sup>  
from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Lowell National Historical Park will once again provide free boat tours on the Merrimac River!

Pick up your free Boat Tour Ticket at the Lowell National Historical Park and the Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival Information Booths!

The Boat Tours will be led by park rangers and youth interns.

Tours will begin from the Boat House to the Guard Locks historic site on the Pawtucket Canal.

This will be a great opportunity for some of the festival goers to get out on the water without being in one of the racing boats.

Tour guides will explain how the canals were used for transportation and industry. Therefore the tour will be a fun ride and educational too!







### *Cambodian-American Foundation For Education*

Cambodia is classified among the poorest Countries in the World.  
I believe Education is the most important tool for the peoples to help themselves  
My dream for "CAFFE" will respond to the immediate need,  
which is identified as vocational and skills training, and focusing on the children.

In the "first step" we will build a school and run it.  
Let's help make this a reality for those who need our help!

Contact: Marshall Kim 212-486-2453

E-mail : [info@caffedu.org](mailto:info@caffedu.org)



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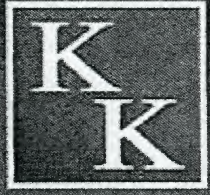
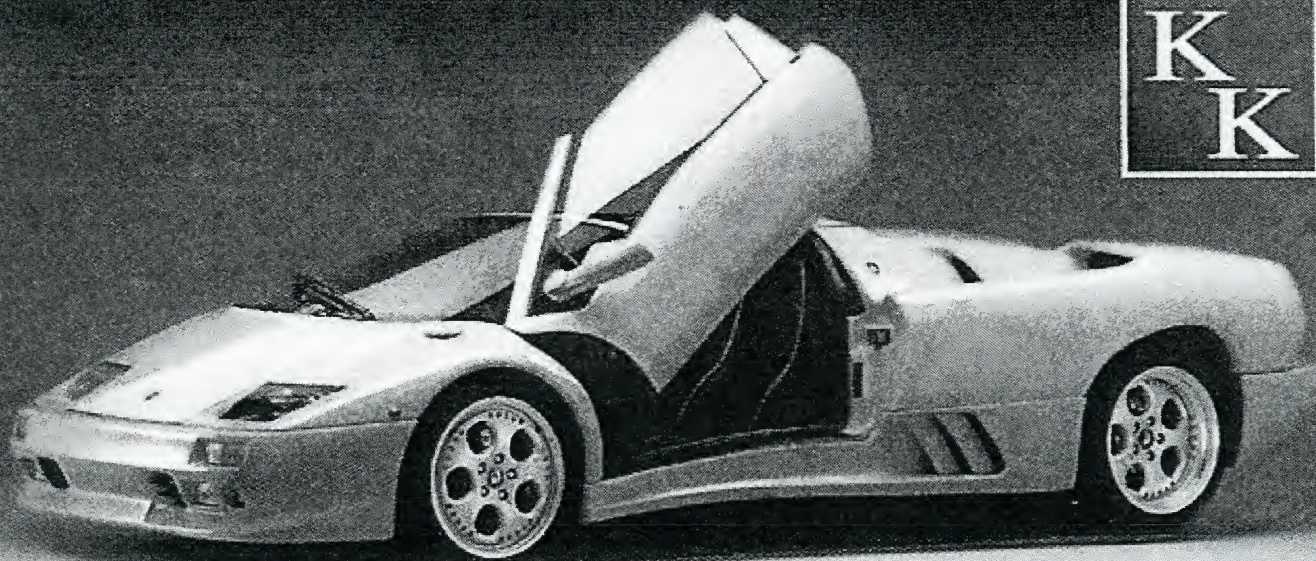
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**KK INSURANCE AGENCY INC.**

*Wishing you and your family a safe and fun time at the 9<sup>th</sup>  
Annual Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival!*

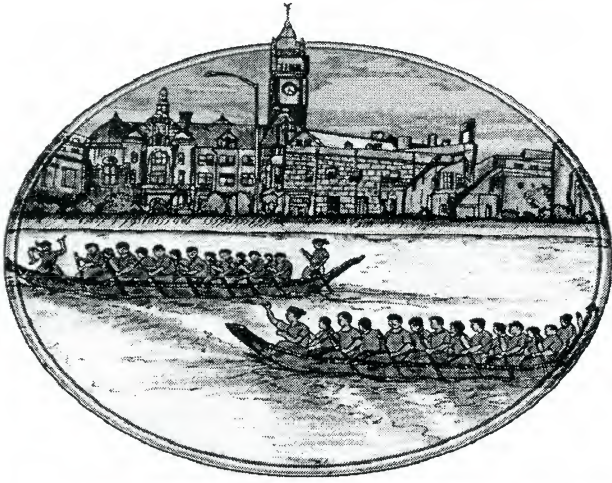


**INSURANCE AGENCY INC.**

716 Middlesex St. Suite 10 • Lowell, MA 01851      Kon Tan • Shally Tan  
**TEL 978-970-2212 • 978-970-2404 • FAX 978-970-2115**



## ABOUT THE LOWELL SOUTHEAST ASIAN WATER FESTIVAL, INC.



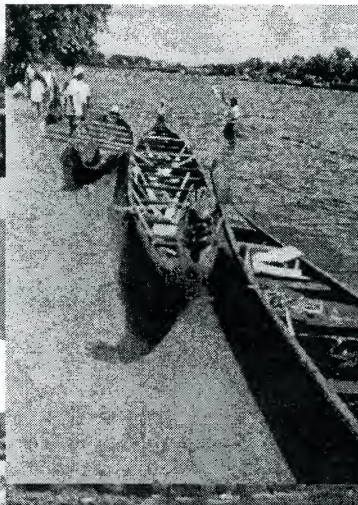
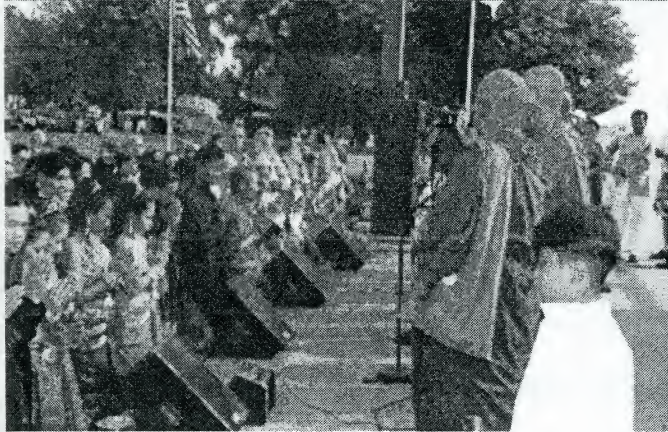
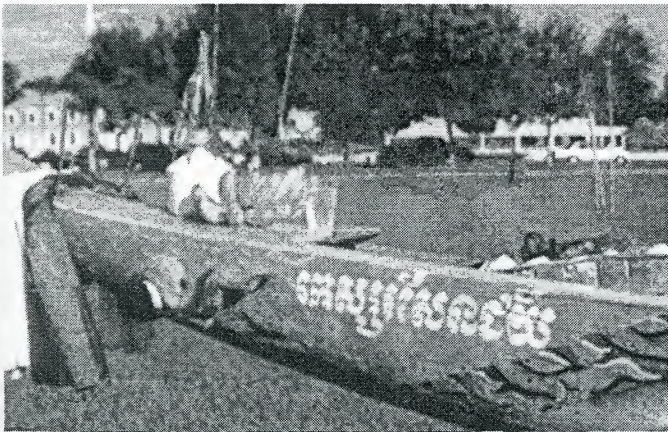
The Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival was initiated in the summer of 1997 to bring the tradition of the boat races and the celebration of water to those who are living in the second largest Khmer community in the United States. The event has been acclaimed for being the largest water festival in the nation, drawing more than 60,000 participants each year. In 1999, the annual Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival was a critical component in helping make the City of Lowell the recipient of the 1999 All American City recognition. The Festival is now recognized internationally with participants from all walks of life and ethnicities coming from across the country and the globe including from Canada, France, and Australia.

The Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival, Inc. became incorporated as a non-profit organization with a Federal tax exempt status as a 501 (c)(3) entity in March 2004. The following organizations are incorporators of the Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival, Inc.:

**Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association of Greater Lowell, Inc.  
Lao Family Mutual Association  
Light of Cambodian Children, Inc.  
Thai Association of Boston  
Wat Buddhahavana of Massachusetts**

The Board of Directors of the annual Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival, Inc. represents a cross-section of community organizations and individuals. These non-profits and individuals are committed to ensuring that the Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival, Inc. represents a wide number of constituents and voices across the communities.

(Photos by Andrew Page Photography, 2002-2003)





# LOUIS L. PINN INSURANCE AGENCY

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ការិយាល័យធានារ៉ាប់រង



1519 Middlesex Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Lowell, MA 01851

Phone: 978.452.4748 \* Fax: 978.452.4754



# Lowell Southeast Asian Water Festival, Inc.

## Incorporators



### Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association

Since its inception in 1984, the CMAA has played an important role in the success of Cambodian and other ethnic minorities here in Greater Lowell. The CMAA offers many important programs such as ESL courses, job training, youth programs, and cultural events. These programs have proven to be invaluable tools for a community comprised of refugees from war torn countries struggling to survive here in America. The CMAA is located at 165 Jackson Street, right in downtown Lowell.

### Lao Family Mutual Assistance Association



Sayon Soeun

Executive Director

978.804.5055

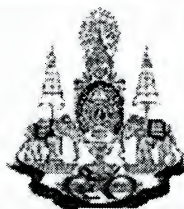
ssoeun@lccweb.org

**Building A Better Future For Our Youth**



สมาคมไทยบอสตัน

Thai Association of Boston



### Wat Buddhābhāvanā Buddhist Meditation Center of MA

#### SPIRITUAL ADVISORY BOARD

Ven. Sao Khon, Chair  
Ven. Mangkone (Vice Chair)  
Ven. Seng Samoeurnt  
Ven. Seng Saphoeun  
Ven. David Chutiko

#### HONORARY CHAIRS

Armand Mercier, City Mayor  
Rithy Uong, City Councilor

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Phone Phetvixay (President)  
Anita Kladgreep  
(Vice President)  
Sayon Soeun (Treasurer)  
Sambath Bo (Clerk)  
Dr. Chea, Phala  
Veasna Noun  
Nou Khousakoun  
Khamtane Khamdy  
Ghla Srithong

## Volunteers

Pissey Voeuk  
Beth Brassel  
Patrick Gallagher  
Sane Smith & Elder Brothers  
LZ Nunn and Paul  
Judy Bessette  
Hai Cheng  
Kisha Beh  
Cambodian Park Service Staff  
Mehmed Ali  
Jennifer Leonard  
Mary Leonard  
James Leonard  
Courtney Korng  
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Sokhan Sin  
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Ronnie Mouth & Company





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Picnic Area



Bath House

Beach Area/Finish Line



Samps  
Pavilion  
Main Stage

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UMass Lowell North Campus Parking (Free)

Heritage Ice Cream



*Special Thanks to our Food, Arts & Crafts, and Information Booths!*

## INTERNATIONAL FOODS

- \* Boston Buddha Vararam Temple
- \* Esan Sausage (Prakuson Peter)
- \* Chiuyeung Bakery (James Chin)
- \* Lao United Church of Christ
- \* The Salvation Army/Lao Group
- \* Bangkok Desert
- \* Garlic Bistro
- \* The Wings of Hope of Cambodia
- \* Malee Thai Food
- \* Pho Bouachan of Baltimore
- \* Thai Association
- \* Sous Cousin
- \* Bai Boon (2 booths)

## ARTS AND CRAFTS

- \* Angkor Hair Design
- \* Angkor Hair Design
- \* Thai Hand
- \* Daniel & Hammers
- \* Saigon Music Corp
- \* Champathone CP
- \* Phonesavanh Phimmasane S. P
- \* Monica Am
- \* Northeast Gymnastic
- \* Kampuchea Video
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- \* Rithy Khmer Video
- \* Lena Store
- \* Neighborhood Vedio (tent)
- \* Khmer Arts
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- \* Sao Thavy



UMass Lowell South Campus Parking Lot (Free)

Mac River

WALKWAY

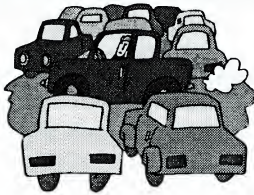
International Food, Information, Arts & Crafts Booths, Stage II

Boat House  
Start Line

Free Boat  
Tours

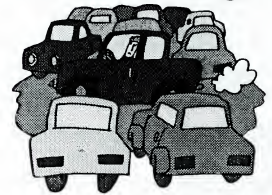
Rourke Bridge

Regatta Field Parking Lot



Dunkin Donuts

MA/COM Parking Lot



## INFORMATION TABLES

- \* Douglas Mercurio (Attorney)
- \* CCAF/Emmanuel Gospel Ctr. Inc.
- \* Lowell General Hospital
- \* Hope Worldwide
- \* CITA Mission of Zion Church
- \* Marathon Staffing Group
- \* H&R Block
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## ROWING TEAMS

1. Thai Association Team  
*Sponsored by Cara Bo Drink*
2. Thai/Lao Team  
*Sponsored by Garlic Bistro Restaurant*
3. National Army Team Guard  
*sponsored by the army guard*
4. New Jersey Dragon Boat team  
*sponsored by the Homeplace Realty*
5. New Jersey Dragon Boat team  
*sponsored by DT Bank North*
6. Beer Laos Team
7. Lao Hollywood
8. Rady Mom Team  
*sponsored by Rady Mom's campaign.*

Photo by Andrew Page Photography



២៧ រឿងបុរសមានកូន ៤ នាក់រៀនចំណេះ ៤ បទ

មានបុរសម្នាក់មានកូនប្រុស ៤ នាក់ បានសិក្សាវិជ្ជា ៤ បទ ស្នាក់  
 ជំនាញរៀនខ្លួន ពីម្នាក់ចេះស៊ី ម្នាក់ចេះដេក ម្នាក់ចេះកាត់ក្តី ម្នាក់រៀន  
 ចេះចងស្រី ។ ឪពុកក៏យកកូនទាំង ៤ នាក់ទៅថ្វាយស្តេច ក្រាបទូលពី  
 វិជ្ជាកូនមួយក្នុងខណៈដែលថ្វាយនោះ ។ ស្តេចទ្រង់ទទួលរក្សាទុក ។  
 ថ្ងៃមួយស្តេចទ្រង់ពិសោធន៍បុរសម្នាក់ដែលចេះស៊ីជាមុនឱ្យរៀបអាធានា  
 ជាច្រើនមុខ ។ បុរសនោះក៏បរិភោគតាមព្រះរាជបញ្ជា ដល់ទៅសម្បូរ  
 មុខដែលស្តេចជួយទឹកនៅមួយក្រចកក្នុងនោះ បុរសនោះមិនបរិភោគ ។  
 ស្តេចសួរបុរសនោះថា “ ហេតុអ្វីបានជាចៅឯងមិនបរិភោគសម្លនេះ? ” ។  
 បុរសក្រាបទូលថា “ សម្លនេះមានទឹកនៅមួយក្រចកនៅក្នុងនោះបានជា  
 ទូលព្រះបង្គំជាមិនទទួលព្រះរាជទាន ” ។ ស្តេចនឹកក្នុងព្រះច័យថា “ បុរស  
 នេះចេះវិជ្ជាខាងស៊ីស្អាតមែន ” ។ អំពីនោះទៅស្តេចទ្រង់ពិសោធន៍បុរស  
 ចេះដេកទៀត ទ្រង់ឱ្យរៀបទីកន្លែងយ៉ាងស្អាត មានពួកកម្រាលក្រាលពីលើ  
 ស្តេចយកសក់មួយសរសៃទៅដាក់ក្រោមក្រមាល លើពួកនោះដល់ពេលចាប់  
 ទ្រង់ហៅបុរសនោះឱ្យទៅដេក ។ បុរសប្រដេកទៅក្រោមភ្លើងវិញភ្លាម ។  
 ស្តេចទ្រង់សួរថា “ ហេតុអ្វីបានជាដេកហើយក្រោកវិញ ? ” ។ បុរស  
 នោះក្រាបទូលថា “ មានសក់មួយសរសៃនៅក្នុងដំណេកនោះបានជាទូលព្រះ  
 បង្គំជាមិនក្រោក ” ។ ស្តេចទ្រង់នឹកសរសើរក្នុងព្រះច័យថា “ បុរសនោះស្នាក់  
 ខាង វិជ្ជាដេកស្អាតមែន ” ។ ថ្ងៃមួយមានបុរសម្នាក់ស្លាប់នៅកណ្តាល  
 វាល គ្មានភិក្ខុភាគស្នាក់ស្នាមអ្វីនៅរូបកាយនោះឡើយ ។ ស្តេចទ្រង់បង្គាប់  
 ឱ្យតុលាការមុខក្រសួងស៊ើបសួររកហេតុនោះ ក៏ជុំយើងទ្រង់ព្រះវិញ្ញាណ  
 រាជបាបប្រើ ទ្រង់នឹកឃើញបុរសដែលចេះវិជ្ជាខាងផ្លូវតុលាការនោះ ក៏មាន  
 ព្រះរាជទិដ្ឋារម្មណ៍ហៅចូលមក ហើយទ្រង់ចាត់ប្រើឱ្យទៅស៊ើបរកពិរុទ្ធ  
 នោះ ។ បុរសនោះ សូមព្រះរាជានុញ្ញាតិអំណាចក្នុងវេលាដែលស៊ើបសួរ  
 ចរករណីនោះ ។ ស្តេចក៏ព្រះរាជទានពរតាមសុំ ។ បុរសនោះចេញទៅ  
 ដល់ទីកន្លែងដែលបុរសនោះស្លាប់ ចាត់ការហៅអ្នកស្រុកមកប្រជុំមិនឱ្យសល់  
 ម្នាក់ ហើយបុរសនោះ ហាមប្រាមថា “ ក្នុងវេលាថ្ងៃស្អែកនេះមិនឱ្យ  
 ទៅណាមកណាមកក្រៅពីភូមិខ្លួនទេ ឱ្យចូលទៅទាំងអស់គ្នាមើលដើមឈើបុណ្យ  
 វិលាយសពបុរសនោះថា ដែលស្លាប់នៅកណ្តាលវាលស្រែ លើកតែមនុស្ស  
 ខ្វាក់ខ្លួនមិនត្រូវឱ្យទៅមើល ក្រៅពីនោះទាំងប្រុសទាំងស្រី ក្មេងចាស់  
 ត្រូវចូលទៅមើលទាំងអស់ ” ។ ខណៈដែលរៀបចំវិលាយសពនោះ បុរស  
 ជាអ្នកស៊ើបសួរ បានចាត់មនុស្សជាច្រើននាក់ ដែលបានឆន្ទៈល្អពីកិច្ចហេតុ  
 ដែលយកការណ៍ក្នុងរឿងនោះ មើលឃើញឈ្មោះណាប្រកប និងកិច្ចដែល  
 បានឆន្ទៈនោះឱ្យយកឈ្មោះនោះមក ប្រគល់ឱ្យបុរសជាឈាមមួយរំពេច ។  
 ពេលភ្លើងនេះពេញកម្លាំងមានស្រីក្រមុំ ម្នាក់ស្រក់ទឹកភ្នែកច្រោក ។  
 បុរសជាអ្នកធម៌ចម្រើនហេតុ ក៏នាំខ្លួននាងនោះ ទៅស៊ើបសួរដំណើរដែល  
 នាងយំនោះ ដោយយោបល់ដ៏ល្អិត ។ នាង ក្រមុំក៏ផ្លូវតែងតែ ដោះសារ  
 ទៅពុំបាន ក៏ប្រាប់បុរសនោះតាមត្រង់ថា “ ខ្លួននាងក្រមុំបានសាលាយំនឹង  
 បុរសដែលស្លាប់ ទើបនឹងបានធ្លាក់ក្នុងយប់ដែល ស្លាប់នោះថា ដំណើរដែល

The Man With Four Sons...

Translated by Sophy Theam from "Khmer Folk Tales: Part 1"  
Published by the Buddhist Institute, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. 1959.

There was a man with four sons who learned to master four different skills. Son Number One knows how to eat well. Son Number Two knows how to sleep well. Son Number Three knows how the law well. And Son Number Four knows his way around women very well. The father brings his sons to meet the king, informing his royal highness each of his son's capabilities. The king agrees to keep the man's sons in his palace.

One day the king wanted to test the son who could eat well by having him eat a large number of dishes prepared by the palace cooks. Son Number One does as he was asked until he got to a soup in which the king had put a fingernail scoopful of uncooked water. The king asks him, "Why did you not eat that soup?" And the young man responds, "That soup has a fingernail scoopful of uncooked water. That's why I did not eat it." The king then thinks to himself, "That young man really knows how to eat well!"

The king then tests the son who could sleep well. He had his servants prepare a clean room with a nice mattress and decorative sheets. When the room was prepared, the king places one strand of hair under the sheets. And when night came, the king summons Son Number Two to go sleep on that bed. The young man lies on the mattress and immediately gets off the bed. The king asks him, "How come you laid down on the bed and suddenly got back off?" The young man tells the king, "Your majesty, there was a strand of hair under the sheets that made me get off of the bed." The king thinks to himself, "That young man really knows how to sleep well!"

There was one day when a man in the kingdom had died in an open field with no signs of beating or scarring of any kind. The king orders the courts to investigate the reason behind this death, but the courts did not come to a conclusion. His Majesty the King then remembers of Son Number Three who was well versed in the law. He asks the young man to look into the matter of the death and find out what exactly happened. The young man then asks permission to have full authority while he was conducting this investigation, which the king grants. He then sets out to the place where the deceased man lay and calls for a meeting with all the townspeople. The man warns the villagers, "Tomorrow, do not go anywhere outside of your own village. I want everyone to attend the funeral of this deceased man who had died in the middle of the rice fields. Everyone, with the exception of the blind and the handicapped, must be there."

During the cremation of the dead body, while the flames were burning at its highest point, a young woman was crying nonstop. The young man notices her and takes her aside for questioning. After a long while, the young woman finally gives up and tells the young man the truth. "I was with that man for the very first time the night he died. When he died, no one had beat him or anything like that. Just before we went to bed, he had asked me to get him some water to drink. I did not go out of my room because I was afraid my parents might know about us. So I took a silver bowl and held it outside my window to catch the rainwater that was coming down our grass roof. After he drank that water, he died." When the young woman finished her story, the young man thinks to himself, "This young woman did not have any ill intent towards that man because they had just been together that night. Dying in that manner, there must be some poisonous animal on top of that roof."



ស្លាប់នោះគ្មានគណនាវាយមុំទ្រូចបង្អើលទេ គឺវេលាមួយដំណេកបុរសនោះប្រើ  
នាងឱ្យទៅរកទឹកផឹក នាងក្រមុំមិនហ៊ានចេញប្រកាខ្លាចឪពុកម្តាយមីងក៏យក  
ខ្នុរត្រងទឹកក្បែរដែលហូរធ្លាក់តាមស្បូវប្រក់ផ្ទះ នោះឱ្យផឹក លុះផឹកហើយ  
ក៏បណ្តាលឱ្យដល់នូវមរណៈក្នុងខណៈនោះទៅ ។ បុរសដែលជាអ្នកស៊ើបសួរ  
ក៏យល់ច្បាស់ក្នុងចិត្តថា " នាងក្រមុំនេះមិនមាន សន្តានចិត្តជាទុក្ខិត

និងបុរសដែលស្លាប់នោះទេ ព្រោះទើបស្រឡាញ់គ្នាបាន ជួបគ្នាក្នុងខណៈពេល  
ត្រាករមានសត្វអាសិរពិសអ្វីនៅលើដំបូលផ្ទះនោះ បានបណ្តាលឱ្យបុរស  
នោះស្លាប់ ។ បុរសជានាយទើបចាត់ឱ្យទៅមើល លើដំបូលផ្ទះនោះ  
ឃើញពស់នាគរាជមួយនៅចំពីលើល្វែងដែលនាងក្រមុំ នោះដេក ។ បុរស  
ជានាយក៏ឱ្យវាយពស់នាគរាជនោះយកទៅថ្វាយស្តេច ក្រាបទូលតាមអំណើ  
ហើយដោះលែងនាងក្រមុំនោះទៅដោយវិនិច្ឆ័យថា " ហេតុដែលបណ្តាល  
ឱ្យបុរសនោះស្លាប់ មកអំពីទឹកក្បែរលាយដោយពិស ពស់នាគរាជ  
ដែលនាងក្រមុំនោះត្រង់មកឱ្យផឹកដោយចេតនា ។ ស្តេចក៏ ទ្រង់សង្កេតថា  
បុរសជានាយចេះស្ទាត់ក្នុងការស៊ើបសួរខាងផ្លូវតុលាការ មែន " ។

ថ្ងៃមួយក្រោយមកមានស្តេចម្នាក់ស្លាប់ ស្តេចនោះមានប្រពន្ធក្មេងល្អ ។  
នាងនោះប្តេជ្ញាថា " មិនយកប្តីទៀតទេ " ។ ដំណឹងនោះជ្រាបដល់ស្តេច  
ទ្រង់ឱ្យនាហ្មឺនសព្វមុខមន្ត្រីទៅចង់នាងមេម៉ាយជាប្រពន្ធខ្មោចស្តេចនោះ ។  
នាហ្មឺនទាំងអស់ទៅចង់មិនបាន ។ ស្តេចទ្រង់គិតថា នាងនេះប្រហែលជា  
មិនយកប្តី ដូចដំណឹងដែលទ្រង់ជ្រាបនោះមែន តែទ្រង់គិតក្នុងព្រះរាជ  
ហឫទ័យថា " នាហ្មឺនសព្វមុខមន្ត្រីទាំងនោះប្រហែលជាមិនពេញសេចក្តី  
ត្រាថ្នានាងមេម៉ាយទេ បើអង្គអញប្រហែលជានាងព្រម " ក៏ទ្រង់យាងទៅ  
កាន់ផ្ទះនាងមេម៉ាយនោះ ហើយទ្រង់ឱ្យប្រាប់នាងថា " ល្ងាចនេះបើអង្គ  
ផ្អែងនាង ឱ្យនាងរៀបចំទីកន្លែងទាំទទួល " ។ ពេលល្ងាចនាងរៀប  
ក្រឡាព្រះបន្ទំ ហើយតែងស្រីបម្រើម្នាក់ដែលមានកើតស្រែងនៅខ្លួនមេម៉ាយ  
ដោយត្រឡប់មកដល់សំបាប់តាក់តែងរូបកាយស្រី គឺត្រឡប់មកសម្រេច ពិរ  
ត្រឡប់មករូបត្រប់ប្រដាប់ ហើយឱ្យនាងនោះចូលទៅក្នុងទីក្រឡាព្រះបន្ទំ  
ដែលរៀបចំទទួលស្តេចតាមព្រះរាជឱង្ការ ។ ដល់ស្តេចយាងមកដោយប្រុង  
មិនបានគិតពិនិត្យសព្វគ្រប់ក៏ទ្រង់យល់ថា " ទីនេះជាទីនាងមេម៉ាយមែន

បានជាមន្ត្រីទាំងឡាយមិនហ៊ានមកនៅទីនេះ " ក៏ទ្រង់ដាក់ព្រះអង្គគង់  
លើដេកដល់គាល់ថា នាងមេម៉ាយហើយទ្រង់ផ្ទុំជាមួយនាងនោះ រួចហើយ  
ទ្រង់កំណត់ព្រះចិត្តថា " អញមកចង់នាងនេះបានហើយ " ។ ដើម្បីឱ្យ  
ឃើញ ជាភស្តុតាងដល់ភ្នែកអ្នកទាំងពួងផង ស្តេចក៏ទ្រង់ខាំផ្ទាល់នាងនោះ  
គាល់គាល់ រួចទ្រង់យាងមកព្រះបរមរាជវាំងវិញ ទ្រង់មានព្រះរាជឱង្ការ  
ផ្តាំថា " ព្រឹកស្អែកនេះឱ្យនាងចូលទៅគាល់ស្តេចកុំខាន " ។ ត្រង់យាង  
ដល់ព្រះបរមរាជវាំង ក៏ទ្រង់មានព្រះរាជឱង្ការប្រាប់ អស់នាហ្មឺនសព្វមុខមន្ត្រី  
ថា " ព្រះអង្គយាងទៅចង់នាងនោះបាន មានទាំងសំគាល់ស្នាមព្រះទន្តនៅ  
ផ្ទាល់នាងនោះផង ហើយទ្រង់បានប្រាប់ឱ្យចូលមកគាល់ព្រឹកនេះ ឱ្យនាហ្មឺន  
សព្វមុខមន្ត្រីទាំងអស់ចាំមើល ។ ដល់នាងមេម៉ាយចូលមកគាល់យកទាំងស្រី

បំរើដែលនាក់តែងកាយទទួលស្តេចពីយប់នោះមកជាមួយផង លុះចូលមក  
គាល់ក៏អង្គុយតាមមុខក្រោយនាងមេម៉ាយអង្គុយមុខស្រីបំរើអង្គុយក្រោយ ។  
ស្តេចឱ្យនាហ្មឺនទៅពិនិត្យមើលកន្លែងសំគាល់ដែលទ្រង់បានប្រាប់ហើយនោះ ។  
លុះភ្ញាក់ងារដែលទទួលព្រះរាជឱង្ការទៅពិនិត្យត្រឡប់មកទទួលស្តេចវិញថា " "   
នាងអង្គុយក្រោយនោះមានស្នាមនៅផ្ទាល់គាល់គាល់ដោយឆ្មេញ ឯនាង  
មេម៉ាយ គ្មានស្នាមអ្វីគាល់គាល់ទេ " ។ ស្តេចក៏ចូលព្រះរាជហរទំយដោយ  
សេចក្តីទ្រេសមិនបានពិនិត្យជាមុនក៏ទ្រង់ព្រះចិត្តត្រិះរិះទៅឃើញថា " នាង  
នេះជាស្រីមានត្រាថ្នានិងរកអ្នកឯណាទៅចង់នាងពុំបាន " ក៏ទ្រង់នឹកដល់  
បុរសដែលជាអ្នកស្លាប់ខាងវិជ្ជាចង់ស្រី ក៏ទ្រង់មានព្រះរាជឱង្ការឱ្យ ចូលមក  
គាល់ ។ ស្តេចក៏មានព្រះរាជឱង្ការសួរទៅបុរសនោះថា " ឯងទៅ  
ចង់នាងមេម៉ាយជាប្រពន្ធស្មើបានឬទេ ? បើឯងត្រូវការវត្ថុអ្វីទ្រង់ព្រះរាជ  
ទានទាំងអស់ " ។ បុរសនោះក្រាបទូលថា " ទទួលតាមបន្ទាល់ដោយ

After the funeral, the young man then goes to the young woman's house and climbs to the top of the roof. And sure enough, there was a King Cobra coiled right on top of the woman's bedroom. He beats the cobra with a club and brings it to the king. "The reason that man died without any bruises or scarring is because he had drunk rainwater poisoned by this cobra's venom. And this young woman had offered the water to the man unknowingly." The king then praises the young man to himself, "This Young Man really knows how to investigate well."

Shortly thereafter, a rich man in the kingdom passes away, leaving a beautiful young wife behind. This young wife was resolute in not taking another husband. Upon hearing about her, the king commands all of the ministers of the palace to try to court her into marrying one of them. But no one succeeds. The king then thinks, "It must be true then that this young widower will not want another husband. But maybe it is because the level of the ministers is too low for her. Perhaps I can win her over." The king then offers a visit to the widower's house and tells her from the ground, "Tonight, I will be joining you. Please prepare your house for me."

That evening, the widower prepares the bed for the king, and dresses up a maid to be with the king as if she were the widower. When the king arrives, he inspects the bedroom and satisfied, says to himself, "This must be the room of the widower's. That's why no one dares to enter here." He goes to the bed where the maid was sleeping and hugs her, saying, "I have won over you!" As proof of his victory, he lightly bit one of her cheeks and left the woman to go back to his palace.

He sent a messenger to summon the widower to the palace the next morning. The next morning came, and after telling the ministers to look out for the bite mark on the cheek, the widower and her maid entered the main chamber of the palace. The maid sat just behind the widower. The king's messenger had been ordered to look for the mark on the widower, but he found none on the beautiful woman who was sitting in the front. He informs the king, "There was a bite mark on the woman that was sitting in the back, but I saw no sign of your mark on the widower." The king then blames himself for being so reckless as to not inspect the woman he was with carefully the night before. He says to himself, "This is a very smart woman. It's impossible to find anyone to win her over!" He then thought of Son Number Four.

The Young Man who specialized in wooing women was asked to meet the king. "Do you think you will be able to



មិនចាំបាច់យកវត្ថុជាតុបត្រទៅទេ សុំតែសំពត់ជាតិបសម្ភាសយកទៅស្លៀក  
ពាក់ ហើយនិងឆ្អឹងតោមួយថោ ដៃខ្ទប់ជាប់ទៅនឹងខ្លួនតែប៉ុណ្ណោះ ។

នាងមេម៉ាយជាប្រពន្ធខ្មោចស្បែក វេលាដែលត្រឡប់ពីគោលស្នេហា  
ក៏រៀបសាលាធ្វើបុណ្យខ្មោចស្បែកជាថ្មី វេលាសព្វថ្ងៃស្រេច មើលឆ្មាំយក  
មកខ្ទប់តម្កល់លើសាលាបុណ្យឆ្មាំ ។ វេលាដប់នោះ បុរសដែលទទួលប្រពន្ធ  
រាជឱង្ការបានទៅដល់លើសាលាដែលនាងមេម៉ាយធ្វើបុណ្យខ្មោចស្បែក ដែលនាង  
ស្រេចនៅវេលាព្រឹកស្អែកនោះ ដល់ហើយធ្វើជាយំសោកនឹកខ្មោចប្រពន្ធ  
ស្លាប់ ដែលមានធាតុស្លាប់ជាប់ខ្លួនផង ដោយសេចក្តីទុក្ខយ៉ាងខ្លាំង ។

ចណ្ឌាអ្នកជាពួកក្រុមនាងមេម៉ាយដែលនៅលើសាលានោះ ទាំងប៉ុន្មាននាក់  
សេចក្តីឆ្ងល់ភ័យរាំងក្រហម ឮសូរទៅបុរសនោះថា - ហេតុអ្វីអ្នកមកយំ  
សោកចោកខ្លួនប្រាណនៅលើទីនេះខ្លាំងម្ល៉េះ ? ។ បុរសនោះប្រាប់ទៅ  
អ្នករក្សាសាលានោះថា - ខ្ញុំឃើញគេធ្វើបុណ្យខ្មោចស្បែកនោះ ខ្ញុំនឹក  
ឃើញដល់ខ្មោចប្រពន្ធខ្ញុំដែលបានស្លាប់ដោយសង្វេគ និង ទុក្ខវេទនាដែល  
ប្រាត់ប្រាសជាទីមួយជាន់ទៀត ខ្លួនខ្ញុំ ទាំងពីរប្រពន្ធស្លាប់ទៅជាយូរហើយឈប់  
បង់ការងារចោលអស់ស្នាមតែធាតុប្រពន្ធដើរដោយសេចក្តី អាណាមរក  
លំយ ។ ហើយបុរសនោះសុំអ្នកចាំ សាលាស្នាក់មួយយប់ ។ បុរស  
ដែលចាំសាលាមិនហ៊ានសំរេចដោយខ្លួនឯង ក៏យកសេចក្តីនោះទៅជំរាប  
នាងមេម៉ាយ ជាចៅហ្វាយ តាមដំណើរដែលបុរសនោះអធិប្បាយអំពី  
សេចក្តីកំសត់របស់ខ្លួន ហើយសុំសាលាស្នាក់ ។ នាងមេម៉ាយមាន  
ចិត្តអាណិតដល់បុរសកំសត់ ដែលមានទុក្ខប្រាត់ប្រាសប្រពន្ធ នោះក៏យល់  
ព្រមឱ្យស្នាក់ ហើយបង្គាប់ទៅមនុស្សបម្រើឱ្យរៀបអាហារ ហោជនឱ្យទាន  
បុរសនោះផង លុះយប់នាងមេម៉ាយទៅស្នាក់ធម៌ទេសនាឆ្លងបុណ្យខ្មោចស្បែក  
នៅលើសាលាតម្កល់ធាតុទុកនៅនោះ ។ ឯបុរសចង់ស្រីក៏ សំរំធ្វើ

ជាដេកលក់ទៅ ។ នាងមេម៉ាយស្លាប់ធម៌ទេសនាចប់ត្រឡប់មកផ្ទះ វិញ ។  
បុរសជាអ្នកចង់ស្រីឃើញឱកាសស្នាក់ល្អ ក៏លួចយកធាតុប្រពន្ធទៅ ដាក់  
ប្របធាតុស្បែកជាថ្មីនាងមេម៉ាយ ។ លុះដល់ព្រឹកឡើង នាងមេម៉ាយចូល  
ដល់សាលា បុរសនោះស្រែកយំខ្លាំងថា - អ្នកណាឈ្មួញយកធាតុប្រពន្ធខ្ញុំ  
ទៅបាត់ ? ។ នាងមេម៉ាយឆ្ងល់ក៏សួរបុរសនោះថា - ហេតុអ្វីអ្នកឯងយំ  
ខ្លាំងម្ល៉េះ ? ។ បុរសនោះប្រាប់ទៅនាងមេម៉ាយវិញថា - អ្នកណា  
លួចប្រពន្ធខ្ញុំទៅបាត់ - ហើយចោទប្រកាន់ទៅលើនាងមេម៉ាយថា -  
ខ្មោចប្តីនាងមេម៉ាយលួចប្រពន្ធខ្លួនទៅ ។ នាងមេម៉ាយមានសេចក្តីអត់  
ចិត្តនឹងបុរសនោះប្រកាន់ដល់ខ្មោចប្តីថា លួចប្រពន្ធខ្លួន ក៏នាំបុរសនោះឱ្យទៅ  
មើល ឃើញនៅជិតគ្នាមែន ។ បុរសក៏ចោទប្រកាន់ខ្លួននាងមេម៉ាយថា -  
ប្តីនាងយកប្រពន្ធជាត់ ធ្វើជាប្រពន្ធខ្លួនឯង លុះតែនាងព្រមធ្វើជាប្រពន្ធជាត់  
វិញ ទើបព្រមសុខចិត្ត ។ សេចក្តីចោទដល់ខ្លួននាងមេម៉ាយនោះ ជា  
អំណុំច្រើនណាស់ដោយឧបាយកលយ៉ាងល្អិត ។ នាងមេម៉ាយក៏ត្រូវដោះ  
សារគ្មានក៏ចាញ់កលនោះជាទម្ងន់ ថែមទាំងមានសេចក្តីអត់ចិត្តនឹងខ្មោចប្តីខ្លួន  
ដែលស្លាប់នោះថា ជាមនុស្សគ្មានសប្បុរសដល់ប្រពន្ធក៏ពុំពេកទុក្ខនឹងខ្លួន  
ណានៅលួចប្រពន្ធតេយកមកបញ្ជូននៅមុខ ក៏ទទួលព្រមយកបុរសនោះធ្វើជា  
ប្តី ជាសេចក្តីតបទោសនឹងខ្មោចប្តីខ្លួនដែលលួចប្រពន្ធបុរសនោះវិញ។ ចំណែក  
បុរសនោះ ដល់បាននាងមេម៉ាយជាប្រពន្ធ ៣៤ ថ្ងៃ ក៏បង្ខេបច្បាប់ទៅជាលំ  
អ្នក ៗ និងនាហ្មឺនសព្វមុខមន្ត្រីបានទតឃើញក៏មានសេចក្តីសរសើរដល់បុរស  
នោះថា ជាអ្នកមានវិជ្ជាចេះចង់ស្រីប្រាកដមែន ។

successfully court the rich man's widow? If you need anything, let me know. I will give you anything you need to assist you." The Young Man answers back, "Your Highness, I will not need any valuable possessions to help me. I just would like an old white fabric to wear and a pot of cow bones that I can carry with me always."

After leaving the palace, the Widower prepares her deceased husband's funeral at the temple. When the body was fully cremated, she collects his ashes, puts them in an urn and displays them for all to see and pray for. The Young Man, clothed only in old, faded white fabric arrives at the temple where the funeral was taking place. He then begins wailing in sorrow about his deceased wife, whose bones are always with him.

The Widower's funeral guests are startled to hear the man sobbing like a child. They ask him, "Why are you in so much sorrow?" The Young Man replies to the caretaker of the temple, "When I see the funeral of the Rich Man, it makes me think of the death of my dear wife who died so horribly and painfully. It reminds me of my separation with my lovely wife. I have died with my wife a long time ago, leaving everything I have except for her bones, wandering around everywhere in sadness." The Young Man then asks the Caretaker if he can spend the night on the temple grounds. The Caretaker tells him that he cannot grant him permission because the Widower is the owner of the grounds and he would have to ask her first.

After listening to the story of the sorrowful man, the Widower agrees to let him sleep for the night and even has her servants prepare food for him. That evening, the Widower stays at the temple until the prayers are finished while the Young Man pretends to be asleep. After the prayers, the Widower goes back to her house. Seeing this as an opportune time, the Young Man takes his "wife's bones" and lays them next to the ashes of the Rich Man.

The next morning, the Widower comes back to the temple to see the Young Man sob endlessly. "Someone has stolen my wife's bones! Who has taken my wife's bones? Someone has stolen my wife!" The Widower approaches the Young Man and asks him, "What is the matter?" The Young Man replies, "Someone has stolen my wife! Your dead husband must have stolen my wife away from me!" Feeling a pang of disappointment that her dead husband may have stolen the Young Man's wife, the Widower leads the Young Man to the main temple where her husband's ashes were, and sure enough the urn of her husband's ashes and the bones of the Young Man's wife were right next to each other!

Upon seeing that, the Young Man says to the Widower, "You see, your dead husband HAS taken my wife as his own! The only fair thing is for me is to take you as my wife in return!" Being unable to get herself out of this situation, and also feeling disappointed that her dead husband was not gentlemanly enough to think about the sorrow his own living wife was going through, in addition to witnessing her husband taking someone else's wife right in front of her, the Widower agreed to become the Young Man's wife as Revenge.

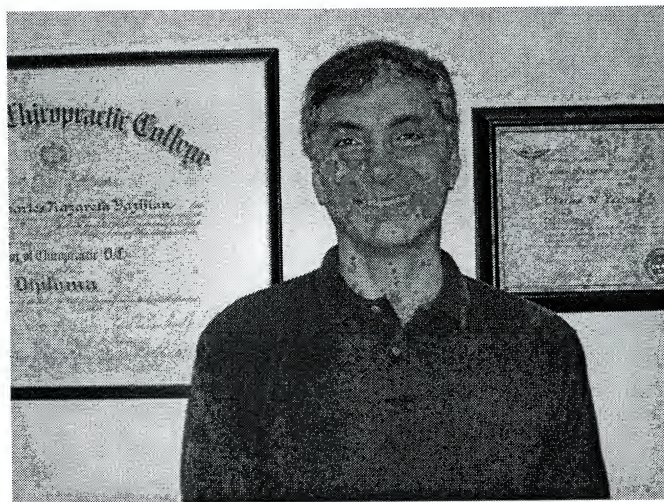
After being married to the woman for three or four days, the Young Man brings his new wife to the palace for all to see. This time, both the king and the ministers praised him. "This Young Man does indeed know how to win over a woman!"

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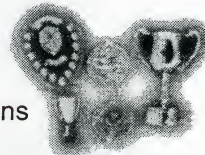
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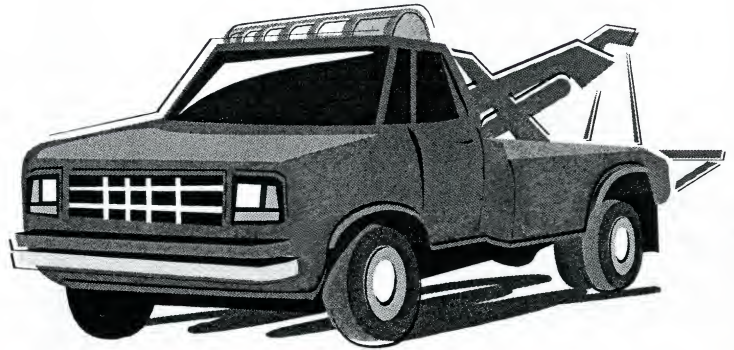
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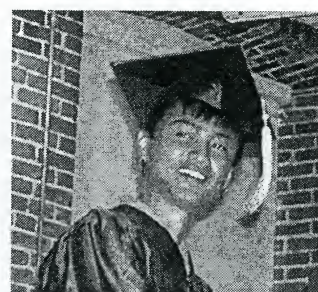


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## LOY KRATONG – “Festival of Light”

On the full moon night of the twelfth lunar month (November), the tide in the rivers is highest and the moon at its brightest, creating a romantic setting ideal for lovers. The Thai people choose this day to hold the 'Loy Kratong' festival, or the 'festival of light.' Loy Kratong is one of the two most recognized festivals in the country.

Loy Kratong is probably the most picturesque and beautiful of all Thai celebrations. 'Loy' literally means 'to float,' while 'kratong' refers to the lotus-shaped receptacle which can float on the water. Originally, the kratong was made of banana leaves or the layers of the trunk of a banana tree or a spider lily plant. A kratong contains food, betel nuts, flowers, joss sticks, candle and coins. The making of a kratong is much more creative these days as many more materials are available.

The Loy Kratong ritual is a simple one. One needs only to light the candles and the joss sticks, make one's wishes and let it float away with the current of a river or a canal. On that day, thousands of people will gather beside the canals and rivers. With kratong in hands, they light the candle, put some coins in the kratong and silently make a wish, and carefully place their kratongs in the water and release them to the current. They watch intently as the float drifts silently downstream, hoping that the candle will not go out. Its flame is said to signify longevity, fulfillment of wishes and release from sins. Altogether it is considered a romantic night for couples or lovers. Couples who make a wish together on Loy Kratong are thought to stay together in the future.

### Origins

Different legends surround the origins of Loy Kratong. The most popular version is it was an expression of gratitude to the goddess of water 'Phra Mae Kongka' for having extensively used, and sometimes polluted, the water from the rivers and canals. It is also in part a thanksgiving for her bounty in providing water for the livelihood of the people.

Some believe the festival originates from Buddhism. They say the offering of flowers, candles and joss-sticks is a tribute of respect to the footprint of the Lord Buddha on the sandy beach of the Narmaha River in India, as well as to the great Serpent and dwellers of the underwater world, after the Lord Buddha's visit to their watery realm. It is possible that this is derived from a Hindu festival that pays tribute to the god Vishnu, who meditates at the center of the ocean.

Others believe that the floral kratong is offered to the pagoda containing the Lord Buddha's topknot, which was cut off at his self-ordination and is now in heaven. Another explanation is that it is a way to pay respect to one's ancestors.

Whatever the true origin, the practice of Loy Kratong first began in the ancient kingdom of Sukhothai in the 13th century. A young queen named Nang Noppamas was believed to be the one who made a small boat laden with candles and incense and floated it down the river. The name Nang Noppamas has been associated with Loy Kratong ever since.

Today, Loy Kratong offers a unique occasion to celebrate. It is a good time for people to make wishes and look to the future as they float their floral offerings along the waterways.



Photo by Sayon Soeun



**\*Special thanks to Wat Buddhahavana for making all of the candle floats once again for this year's "Candle Float Ceremony" to be held on Friday, August 19<sup>th</sup>, at the Lower Locks canal located off of the Middlesex Community College Campus.**



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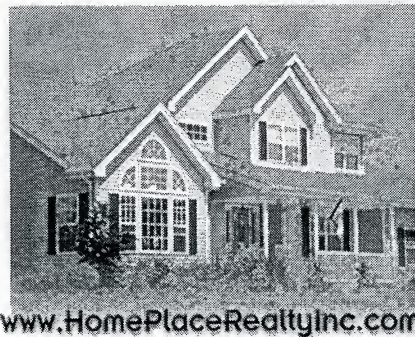
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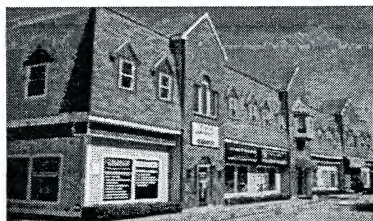
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